

Resources for the Study of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC)

Books:

Arsenault, Raymond. *Freedom Riders: 1961 and the Struggle for Racial Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Arsenault focuses on the courage and strength of the Freedom Riders in 1961, and their role in solidifying the movement, especially bringing together the student movement, from which SNCC was born.

Branch, Taylor. *Parting the Waters: America in the King Years, 1954-63*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1988.

Part biography, part history, Branch explores a nine-year period with Dr. King at the center. His thorough research also includes much about student movement leaders, particularly John Lewis.

Carson, Clayborne. *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1981.

From sit-ins to black power, radicalization and falling apart, this is an in-depth look at the cutting edge of student organizing in the 60s.

Carson, Clayborne; David J. Garrow; Gerald Gill; Vincent Harding; and Darlene Clark Hine, eds. *The Eyes on the Prize Civil Rights Reader: Documents, Speeches, and Firsthand Accounts from the Black freedom Struggle*. New York: Penguin Books, 1991.

Astounding collection of pieces by and about key people and events in the Civil Rights Movement, including speeches, letters, and phone conversations. This collection includes the SNCC statement of purpose, "Freedom Summer" by Sally Belfrage, "SNCC-SCLC Relations," "SNCC Brief Report on Guinea" by James Forman, and pieces by Stokely Carmichael.

Cobb Jr., Charles E. *On the Road to Freedom: A Guided Tour of the Civil Rights Trail*. Chapel Hill: Algonquin Books, 2008.

Part history, part travel book, Cobb takes the reader to the places of the Civil Rights Movement; SNCC is mentioned throughout, however the book is organized by place rather than topic, so not a comprehensive picture of SNCC itself.

Collier-Thomas, Bettye and V.P. Franklin, eds. *Sisters in the Struggle: African-American Women in the Civil Rights-Black Power Movement*. New York: NYU Press, 2001.

Records and celebrates the contributions of African American women to the Civil Rights Movement, including Ella Baker, who helped start SNCC, Fannie Lou Hamer, and Septima Clark, among many others.

Crawford, Vicki L., Jacqueline Anne Rouse, and Barbara Woods, eds. *Women in the Civil Rights Movement: Trailblazers and Torchbearers*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1990.

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A collection of essays that show the diversity of the experiences of women in the civil rights movement - their successes and also their problems and challenges. Includes Unita Blackwell, Gloria Richardson, the Cambridge Movement, and more.

Dierenfield, Bruce J. *The Civil Rights Movement: Revised Edition (Seminar Studies in History Series)*. New York: Longman, 2008.

Enormous compilation of literature, including memoirs and local studies. Mostly about the 1960s, but also explores discrimination in later years, and the reasons for the ending of the Civil Rights Movement itself.

Dittmer, John. *Local People: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi*. Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1994.

An in-depth look at the Civil Rights struggle in the state of Mississippi in particular, focusing on local people, local movements and those who don't usually receive press.

Due, Tananarive and Patricia Stevens Due. *Freedom in the Family: A Mother-Daughter Memoir of the Fight for Civil Rights*. New York: One World Books, 2003.

A deep and personal story of a family's fight against injustice: mother Patricia who, during height of the Civil Rights Movement was part of the student movement, a peer of SNCC founders, and daughter Tananarive, who lives with the legacy of commitment to justice.

Fairclough, Adam. *Better Day Coming: Black and Equality, 1890-2000*. New York: Viking, 2001.

This massive project by historian Adam Fairclough covers a vast span of years, being survey in nature rather than in-depth. The focus is mainly on the south, and does cover the formation of SNCC, work in Mississippi, and Freedom Summer in some detail.

Gottheimer, Josh, ed. *Ripples of Hope: Great American Civil Rights Speeches*. New York: Basic Civitas Books, 2003.

A book of speeches addressing issues of civil rights: spanning from 1789 to 1998, John Quincy Adams to Harvey Milk. Particularly relevant to SNCC: John Lewis's "We Must Free Ourselves," and Stokely Carmichael's "Black Power" from October 1966.

Greenburg, Cheryl Lynn, ed. *A Circle of Trust: Remembering SNCC*. New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1998.

A series of over forty oral histories from SNCC members, covering its origins, early strategies and actions, and ultimate fate.

Halliburton, Warren J., ed. *Historic Speeches of African Americans*. New York: Franklin Watts, 1993.

A compilation of speeches from slavery to present, including Stokely Carmichael's "On Black Power" and James Forman's "Black Manifesto."

Hampton, Henry and Steve Fayer. *Voices of Freedom: An Oral History of the Civil Rights Movement From the 1950s Through the 1980s*. New York: Bantam Books, 1990.

A spectacular collection of interviews from the archives of the PBS *Eyes on the Prize* series: the voices of the people who lived it.

Hogan, Wesley C. *Many Minds, One Heart: SNCC's Dream for a New America*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007.

A study of the internal workings of SNCC, what it accomplished, and the foundations it laid.

Joseph, Peniel E. *Waiting 'Til the Midnight Hour: A Narrative History of Black Power in America*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1996.

A history of the Black Power Movement: archival, oral history, big players and small. Includes the changes in SNCC after John Lewis and with Stokely Carmichael, factionalism, and the influence of black nationalism.

Levine, Ellen. *Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories*. New York: Puffin, 1993.

A collection of stories told by people who were children and teenagers during the 1950s and 60s. This is a colorful oral history is made up of the words of those who lived and saw that time period as young people.

Lewis, John with Michael d'Orso. *Walking with the Wind: A Memoir of the Movement*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1998.

A vivid and personal account of the movement years by one of its key leaders.

Littlesugar, Amy, and Floyd Cooper. *Freedom School, Yes!* New York: Philomel, 2001.

This children's book tells the story of the Freedom Summer through the eyes of Jolie, of one brave teacher, nineteen-year-old Annie, and the courageous family who takes her in. Reading levels 1-4.

Martinez, Elizabeth. *Letters from Mississippi: Reports from Civil Rights Volunteers and Freedom School Poetry of the 1964 Freedom Summer*. AZ: Zephyr Press, 2007.

A very lively and personal look at a very important moment in Civil Rights history, this is a collection of writing by Freedom Summer participants.

Menkart, Deborah; Alana D. Murray; Jenice L. View, eds. *Putting the Movement Back Into Civil Rights Teaching: A Resource Guide for Classrooms and Communities*. Teaching for Change, 2004.

A guide for teachers and students to rediscover the urgency of Civil Rights leaders, acknowledge the complexity of the struggle and "uncover and humanize the stories of ...ordinary people who performed heroic acts in the name of social justice" (from the introduction).

Morris, Aldon D. *The Origins of the Civil Rights Movement: Black Communities Organizing for Change*. New York: The Free Press, 1984.

An exploration of the role of the community organizers that powered the movement, this book includes a sociological perspective of groups such as SNCC, SCLC, NAACP and others.

Olson, Lynne. *Freedom's Daughters : The unsung heroines of the civil rights movement from 1830 to 1970*. New York: Scribner, 2001.

A stunning account of the women who were the backbone of the movement.

Payne, Charles M. *I've Got the Light of Freedom: The Organizing Tradition and the Mississippi Freedom Struggle*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995.

A study of the legacy of community organizing in Mississippi.

Project South staff and members. *Black Radical Traditions in the US South: A Toolkit for Community Education and Liberation*. Atlanta: Project South, 2008.

Project South is an organization that creates spaces for movement building. This toolkit is designed for young people, grassroots organizations, and others to learn more about the black radical tradition in the South and take action in their communities.

Raines, Howell. *My Soul Is Rested: The Story of the Civil Rights Movement in the Deep South*. New York: Penguin, 1977.

Raines is a reporter born in Alabama in 1943. The personal work is a history and tribute to the people who made the civil rights movement happen, made up of many interviews. There is a chapter on student sit-ins and the birth of SNCC.

Ransby, Barbara. (2003) *Ella Baker and the Black Freedom Movement: A Radical Democratic Vision*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press

Biography of Ella Baker (1903-1986), one of the most important African American leaders of the twentieth century and perhaps the most influential woman in the civil rights movement. Baker was a gifted grassroots organizer whose remarkable career spanned fifty years and touched thousands of lives. She was a key figure in the NAACP, a founder of the SCLC, and a prime mover in the creation of SNCC. Baker reviewed the concept paper for freedom schools in Mississippi and mobilized others to make them a reality.

Rappaport, Doreen, and Shane Evans. *Nobody Gonna Turn Me 'round: Stories and Songs of the Civil Rights Movement*. Cambridge, Mass.: Candlewick, 2006.

Through 10 turbulent years, black southerners filled jails and public places with the songs and strength passed down from their ancestors. This final book in a trilogy about the African-American experience is a tribute to the crusaders for equality and peace in America, a crusade that continues to this day.

Springer, Kimberly. *Living for the Revolution: Black Feminist Organizations, 1968-1980*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005.

A book of oral history interviews with key activists in the black feminist movement, examining the organizations that first explicitly used feminist theory; includes mention of Ella Baker, the Black Women's Liberation Caucus, and briefly considers gender issues within SNCC.

Theoharis, Jeanne F. and Komozi Woodard, eds. *Freedom North: Black Freedom Struggles Outside the South, 1940-1980*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003.

A collection of essays demonstrating the breadth of Civil Rights Movement and focusing on the less-studied movement in the North.

Weatherford, Carole Boston. *Freedom on the Menu: The Greensboro Sit-ins*. New York: Dial for Young Readers, 2005.

Carole Weatherford offers a child's-eye view of how ordinary citizens stood up for themselves and caused a revolution, both close to home and far beyond. A picture book.

Weisbrot, Robert. *Freedom Bound: A History of America's Civil Rights Movement*. New York: Penguin, 1991.

In this chronicle of three decades of Civil Rights struggle, Weisbrot argues that there is a long way to go.

Wiles, Deborah. *Freedom Summer*. New York: Atheneum for Young Readers, 2001.

This stirring account of the "Freedom Summer" that followed the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 powerfully and poignantly captures two boys' experience with racism and their friendship that defied it. A picture book for all ages.

Williams, Juan. *Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years 1954-1965*. New York: Penguin Books, 1987.

Companion guide to the PBS *Eyes on the Prize* series.

Wilkinson, Brenda. *The Civil Rights Movement: An illustrated history*. New York: Crescent Books, 1997.

Photos and drawings from the slavery period through the late 1960s.

Zinn, Howard. *SNCC: The New Abolitionists*. Cambridge: South End Press, 1964.

"On-the-spot reportage" based on Zinn's time in Alabama, Mississippi, and time spent on SNCC's executive board.

Films and Music

***Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years 1954-1965*. Dir. Henry Hampton. PBS, 2010. DVD.**

Produced by Blackside, *Eyes on the Prize* tells the definitive story of the Civil Rights era from the point of view of the ordinary men and women whose extraordinary actions launched a movement that changed the fabric of American life, and embodied a struggle whose reverberations continue to be felt today. Winner of numerous Emmy Awards, a George Foster Peabody Award, an International Documentary Award, and a Television Critics Association Award, *Eyes on the Prize* is the most critically acclaimed documentary on civil rights in America.

***February One: The Story of the Greensboro Four.* By Daniel Blake Smith. California Newsreel, 2003. DVD.**

February One is an hour-long documentary that focuses on the four friends who initiated the Greensboro sit-in movement, thereby jumpstarting a wave of civil rights direct action protests across the South. Using dramatic reenactments, ethnographic interviews, photo stills and archival footage, this Video Dialog film explores the intensely personal motives behind Ezell Blair, Jr. (Jibreel Khazan), Franklin McCain, Joseph McNeil and David Richmond collective decision to sit-in at a downtown Woolworth's lunch counter, and the enormous public impact this decision would have on the civil rights movement.

***Freedom On My Mind.* Dir. Connie Field and Marilyn Mulford. California Newsreel, 1994. DVD.**

Nominated for an Academy Award, winner of both the American Historical Association and the Organization of American Historians awards for best documentary, this landmark film tells the story of the Mississippi freedom movement in the early 1960s when a handful of young activists changed history. *Freedom On My Mind* vividly chronicles this complex and compelling history of the Mississippi voter registration struggles of 1961 to 1964: the interracial nature of the campaign, the tensions and conflicts, the fears and hopes. It is the story of youthful idealism and shared vision, of a generation who believed in and fought for the principles of democracy.

***Freedom Riders: The Children Shall Lead.* William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation, 2005. DVD.**

The Civil Rights Movement is an important example of local people becoming empowered to create positive change. 'Freedom Riders' encourages understanding of this period in order to be more truthful about the past as we move forward toward building an equitable future together. Produced by the William Winter Institute for Racial Reconciliation and The Documentary Center, both at The University of Mississippi, and the non-profit PieceWorks: a Deep South Arts Collective, the film serves as a secondary educational resource and is available to high schools for no fee.

***Freedom Song.* Dir. Phil A. Robinson. Turner Home Ent., 2006. DVD.**

This made-for-TV movie focuses on the grassroots efforts of a Student Non-Violent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) to combat the entrenched racism of the segregated South. The film focuses on Owen Walker (Vicellus Reon Shannon), a youth who longs to address the injustices of his hometown in rural Mississippi. His father Will (Danny Glover) forswore his own previous attempts to organize local blacks. Owen resents his father, until he too realizes the true cost of protesting.

***Ghosts of Mississippi.* Dir. Rob Reiner. Warner Home Video, 1996. DVD.**

The widow of murdered civil rights leader Medger Evers and a district attorney struggle to finally bring the murderer to justice.

***Let Freedom Sing: How Music Inspired the Civil Rights Movement.* Dir. Jon Goodman. Time Life Entertainment, 2009. DVD.**

Let Freedom Sing powerfully retells one of the greatest stories in American history, the Civil Rights Movement, in a compelling new way... through the singers and songwriters who fought for change through their music. This amazing DVD chronicles the power of lyrics and songs that helped move a generation during turbulent times, bringing change to our country. This is the story that made President Obama's success possible, told for the first time through the music that drove it and those who were there. Narrated by Louis Gosset Jr., interviews with Gladys Knight, Isaac Hayes, Chuck D, Andrew Young, Quincy Jones, Pete Seeger and more. Also features 29 performances, 10 top ten classic hits! Includes Respect, Change Is Gonna Come, People Get Ready, Fight the Power and What's Going On.

***Mighty Times: The Children's March.* Dir. Robert Houston. HBO Family, 2004. DVD.**

The Children's March tells the story of how the young people of Birmingham, Alabama, braved fire hoses and police dogs in 1963 and brought segregation to its knees. Their heroism complements discussions about the ability of today's young people to be catalysts for positive social change.

***Mississippi, America.* Prod. Judith McCray and Department of Radio-Television at Southern Illinois University at Carbondale. PBS Home Video, 1995. Videocassette.**

In moving interviews with such luminaries of the movement as Bob Moses and Congressman John Lewis, as well as with the use of archival footage, *Mississippi, America* details the drama and danger faced on a daily basis. Appropriate attention is given to the three voter-registration volunteers who were murdered by a conspiracy of local lawmen and the Ku Klux Klan. After documenting how difficult victories were eventually won, the video ends with a poignant segment focusing on the crises of poverty and insufficient education in Mississippi today. This is a very intelligent and professional look at a vitally important episode in modern American history that will provide depth to those who may know the story and open the eyes of younger viewers who may be encountering Freedom Summer for the first time.

***Mississippi Burning.* By Chris Gerolmo and Peter Biziou. Metro Goldwyn Mayer Home Entertainment [éd.], 2004. Videocassette.**

Mississippi Burning is a 1988 American crime drama film loosely based on the FBI investigation *Renee* into the real-life murders of three civil rights workers in the U.S. state of Mississippi in 1964. The movie focuses on two fictional FBI agents (portrayed by Gene Hackman and Willem Dafoe), who investigate the murders. Hackman's character (Agent Rupert Anderson) is loosely based on FBI agent John Proctor, and Dafoe's character (Agent Alan Ward) is very loosely based on agent Joseph Sullivan.

***Murder in Mississippi.* Dir. Roger Young. Warner Bros. Television, 1990. DVD.**

Murder in Mississippi was a 1990 television movie which dramatized the last weeks of civil rights activists Michael "Mickey" Schwerner, Andrew Goodman and James Chaney, and the events leading up to their disappearance and subsequent murder in the summer of 1964. It starred Tom Hulce as Schwerner, Jennifer Grey as his wife Rita, Blair Underwood as Chaney, and Josh Charles as Goodman.

***Sing for Freedom the Story of the Civil Rights Movement through Its Songs.* Smithsonian/Folkways Records, 1990. CD.**

Hymns, spirituals, gospel songs, prayers and speeches have been a unifying force in the struggle for civil rights throughout the United States. These early 1960s field recordings from campaign centers such as Montgomery and Birmingham, Alabama; Albany and Atlanta, Georgia; Greenwood, Mississippi; and Nashville, Tennessee testify to the irrepressible power of song in the Civil Rights Movement.

***Standing On My Sisters Shoulders.* Dir. Laura J. Lipson. Women Make Movies, 2002. DVD.**

The award-winning documentary “*Standing On My Sisters’ Shoulders*” takes on the Civil Rights movement in Mississippi in the 1950’s and 60’s from the point of view of the courageous women who lived it – and emerged as its grassroots leaders. These women stood up and fought for the right to vote and the right to an equal education. They not only brought about change in Mississippi, but they altered the course of American history.

***Voices of the Civil Rights Movement Black American Freedom Songs, 1960-1966.* Smithsonian Folkways, 1997. CD.**

This double-CD reissue of *The Voices of the Civil Rights Movement: Black American Freedom Songs, 1960-1966* documents a central aspect of the cultural environment of the Civil Rights Movement, acknowledging songs as the language that focused people’s energy. These 43 tracks are a series of musical images, of a people in conversation about their determination to be free. Many of the songs were recorded in mass meetings held in churches, where people from different life experiences, predominantly Black, with a few White supporters, came together in a common struggle. These freedom songs draw from spirituals, gospel, rhythm and blues, football chants, blues, and calypso forms. The enclosed booklet written by Bernice Johnson Reagon provides rare historic photographs along with the powerful story of African American musical culture and its role in the Civil Rights Movement.